

THE DEDICATION OF THE SCULPTURE AND PAINTINGS
ON THE THEME OF CHRIST TEACHING, BY JACK GREAVES
Broad Street Presbyterian Church
Columbus, Ohio
May 13, 1979
John M. Buchanan, Minister

Every group has its saints, persons whose strength and leadership and character influence the group long after they are gone. Broad Street Presbyterian Church, after 92 years, has many saints and this morning we are privileged to remember several of them. We are to dedicate to the glory of God the sculpture and painting on the theme of Christ Teaching, in memory of:

Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Wilson Crawford
Mr. and Mrs. John Hughes Hislop
John Hughes Hislop, Jr.
Jeanne Crawford Hislop
Thomas Hughes Hislop

The entire work is presented to Broad Street Presbyterian Church by Mrs. P. Webster Huntington, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Crawford and sister of Catherine Hislop, and Mrs. William G. Pace III, daughter of Mrs. Hislop and granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Crawford.

Frederick Crawford was a Trustee of this Church years ago; the Chancel of this Sanctuary was given in his memory by his wife after his death.

Mrs. Crawford died in 1955. Her love for this church was legendary. The Crawford car was dubbed "The Gospel Wagon" because of the stops it made bringing people to Sunday evening services at Broad Street Presbyterian Church. Her minister, at the time of her death, Raymond V. Kearns, wrote about her: "I am grateful that I came to know her and something of her great love and devotion to her church and her Lord. Many times when I enter the sanctuary on a Sunday or again on a week day when no one is there, I am conscious of the great part she played in making possible that beautiful place of worship. All of us at Broad Street Church will ever be indebted to her in so many ways..."

Jack Hislop was a prominent Columbus business man, an Elder in this congregation whose common sense caused him to believe that we would need the lot east of here and against considerable opposition - to arrange for the church to buy it. It was a prophetic gesture in that the Christian Education building now stands on that property.

His wife - Catherine Crawford Hislop, died on August 11, 1976. She was the kind of person who made this a great church: generous, a supporter and enabler of many of the fine things that happen in our community in education, with young people, in the arts. Like her mother before her, she loved this Church, honestly and deeply. I was privileged to know her before she died and I will never forget words said about her at her funeral by another former pastor, and her friend, J. Harry Cotton. "Most of what I know about the Christian faith," he said, "I learned not from books of theology, but from the lives of Christian people - like Catherine Hislop."

Mr. and Mrs. Hislop had four children: Mrs. Pace; Thomas Hughes Hislop was an usher and a Trustee at Broad Street Presbyterian Church; John Hughes Hislop, Jr. died in childhood and Jeanne Crawford Hislop while in college.

It is appropriate for those of us who use this church and love it today, to remember those who loved it before - and whose faith and commitment are built into the very walls.

The sculpture we dedicate this morning is the result of more than two years of study, planning and work. The artist, Jack Greaves, formulated the basic concept and, of course, brought the project to its obvious conclusion. More about Mr. Greaves is contained in the bulletin this morning. He will be available, along with his wife, Mrs. Huntington and Mrs. Pace in Palmer Hall for you to greet following the service. In addition, he will speak in Palmer Hall on May 27 at 10:00 on the subject of his sculpture, Christ Teaching.

This project has brought into dialogue two old friends who have not often been speaking in recent centuries: Art and Theology. At the time of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th Century, the two were pulled apart. The enthusiastic Reformers, reacting against what they regarded as superstition and thinly veiled paganism, cleansed their churches of all art: paintings, sculpture, even stained glass. The vehicle for God's word, for Protestants, became the spoken word. We were even suspicious of good music.

Concentration on the spoken word and the written word has been our genius. It has also been our poverty. And now, happily, some four centuries after the fact, we are becoming free and secure enough to consider again the ways the mystery and majesty and glory of our faith can find artistic expression.

There is no question of idolatry. This work does not contain the essence of deity. It deserves respect only because it is good art. What it does, is point elsewhere - to the reality behind all reality we call God; to the good news of God's love; and to the imperative under which we place ourselves, to live in that love and to express it to others.

The work speaks for itself. I shall speak about it - not today - but in two weeks. I invite you this morning to experience it; to walk past it after the service and to greet the artist and the donors.

I speak for all involved in saying thank you to them: to the artist, his wife and helper; to the donors whose love for their families and this church is contained in the work. And - for the lives we remember - for this glorious addition to our church - thanks be to God.

PRAYER

O God, giver of all life and father of us all, we thank you for the lives of those we remember this morning. We give thanks for their faith and love and the memory of committed discipleship which each of them, in a special way, left to this church. We are grateful, father, for the gift we have been given, for the special sensitivities of the artist, for the affection of the donors.

O God, we are grateful for mystery and majesty and beauty and truth, and for the human spirit which in its striving for them, is seeking for you.

God our father, in the hallowed memory of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Wilson Crawford, Mr. and Mrs. John Hughes Hislop, John Hughes Hislop, Jr., Jeanne Crawford Hislop, Thomas Hughes Hislop, we dedicate this work now to your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.